

SDWG Highlights

Highlights – SDWG Informal Open Discussion and General Meeting Held September 17 – 19, 2012, Reykjavik, Iceland

The SDWG meeting was held at the Víkin Maritime Museum, Reykjavik, Iceland.

The SDWG started with an **Informal Open Business Dialogue** 17 September with 25 representatives from a wide range of industry sectors that had gathered the day before for an independent Arctic meeting organized by the World Ocean Council. The Informal Open Business Dialogue provided a good opportunity for delegates to hear about the challenges and opportunities, in particular of how business can contribute to sustainable development in the Arctic.

Global Reporting Initiative (<https://www.globalreporting.org>) also informed the group about their business reporting framework. Although this was a first informal discussion between SDWG and business representatives, it was clear that there was a common sense of urgency and a need to cooperate in order to respect a sustainable development of the Arctic. Participants noted there seems to be a critical mass of participants to continue these common efforts on a cross-sectorial and circumpolar basis as well examine how to develop 'Best Practices' for different sectors operating in the Arctic.



On 17 September there was also a presentation of the ongoing work by the project leaders of the Arctic Human Development Report II. The next step is a lead-authors conference on 10-11 November in Roskilde, Denmark. The project will present a Fact Sheet and Executive Summary for the 2013 Ministerial and the launch of the final report will be the summer of 2014.

There was a presentation by both the International Arctic Science Committee (IASC) and the International Arctic Social Sciences Association (IASSA). Both organizations expressed interest to

support and work closely with the SDWG. As well the participant heard a unique presentation by the Circumpolar Agricultural Association.

The formal SDWG General Meeting, which was held 18-19 September, carried a very charged agenda. The participants were informed of the progress on the "**Adaptation Actions for a Changing Arctic (AACA)**" which was approved by the Deputy Ministers



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Meeting in Stockholm, 15 May, 2012. The SDWG has the responsibility for section (a) of the initiative and will be compiling the work of the other Arctic Council working groups. An update will be given to the SAO's at the meeting in Haparanda in November.

The SDWG discussed the progress of establishing an **Arctic Social, Economic and Cultural Expert Group** linked to the working group. The terms of reference for this expert group were examined and are now awaiting final written comments. A new proposal on **Traditional Knowledge** was presented by Finn Danielsen, Senior Ecologist at Nordisk Fond for Miljø og Udvikling, Copenhagen, Denmark. The project title is "*Enhancing the use of local knowledge to monitor and manage natural resources and to adapt to the challenges of globalization and climate change*". The proposal received a lot of interest and comments and a revised proposal will be discussed at the next SDWG meeting. The proposal to develop an information tool for **Corporate Social Responsibility in the Arctic** was approved. The idea, when ready and after SAO approval, is to make a separate section on CSR, on the SDWG and the Arctic Council websites. Sweden will invite country experts for a first meeting in the near future. The Co-chair of the **Arctic Human Health Expert Group (AHHEG)**, Birgitta Evengård, reported on the scoping exercise (Phase I) of the **Food and Water Security** project. There will be an expert group workshop in Stockholm 19-20 December, to finalize the Phase II of the project.

The SDWG Secretariat also presented a draft **SDWG Communication Strategy**, in line with that of the Arctic Council. The aim is to complement the overall strategy and provide focus on the work done by the SDWG. As an integral part of the communication strategy, Bruno Pillozzi and Linnea Nordström presented a draft for a new **SDWG website**. The site would have a look and feel immediately identifying the SDWG as an integral part of the Arctic Council and would feature a new user-friendly interface.



In addition, there were also updates on eleven (11) SDWG ongoing projects, mainly work in good progress. The participants also discussed the status of Arctic Council cross-cutting activities such as: the **Arctic Marine Shipping Assessment (AMSA IIc)**, the **Arctic Resilience Report (ARR)** in a recorded presentation, the **Arctic Ocean Review (AOR)**, and the work of the **Ecosystem Based Management Experts Group (EBM)**. Concerning the AMSA II c, SDWG will contribute with an updated input on Areas of Heightened Cultural Sites by the latest 31 December to the PAME working group.

The **Arctic Human Health Expert Group (AHHEG)** also presented an overview of their work and key initiatives that they are examining to propose to the SDWG.

Mixed with the hard work by all participants, the SDWG was invited to a reception by the Icelandic Ministry of Foreign Affairs at the museum "The Settlement Exhibition", a preserved archeological site depicting construction methods and the way of life at the Icelandic settlement in 871. The next day the group was invited to a reception at the Swedish Embassy. In addition we were given the opportunity to visit a modern fishing trawler which was docked at the harbor.

